



The *Space News Roundup* editors conduct a survey in the Bldg. 3 cafeteria on how the Internet helps employees on their job. From left are Astronaut Franklin Chang-Diaz, Ken Jenks of Engineering, Natasha Calder and Karen Schmidt of the Roundup and Steve Sokol of the Spaceflight Meteorology Group.

Surfing Survey

Space News Roundup survey results show Internet helpful on the job

By Karen Schmidt

Surfing the net does increase productivity according to JSC employees who completed a recent *Space News Roundup* survey.

SNR editors spent time recently in the JSC cafeterias asking employees how the Internet helps them on the job. Results on the 75 surveys collected were overwhelmingly positive that the variety of Internet services help engineers, scientists, secretaries and managers perform their job tasks more efficiently than in the past.

"I have quite a lot of contacts world wide," said Astronaut Franklin Chang-Diaz. "The Internet helps work payload and other space related issues quickly."

The majority of employees said they use the Internet for research on a wide variety of topics including emergency management, legal, directives, specifications, data bases and project status.

Surprisingly, the most popular feature at JSC is the electronic phone book. When asked how they use the net, "looking up phone numbers for JSC employees," was the most frequent answer employees gave. The second most popular item on the Internet with employees that were surveyed was the Shuttle Web Home Page. Employees use the web site to obtain information about past, current and future flights.

"I can check newspapers at remote locations and get first hand knowledge of emergency situations," said Bob Gaffney, emergency coordinator at JSC. "It's helpful to review other emergency response teams' incidents so that we learn from their experience."

A majority of employees surveyed use the Internet to exchange information with other NASA centers.

"During STS-78, payload support activities required fast coordination of documents with Marshall Space Flight Center," said John McKenna, a USA engineer that



supports Payload Operations in Mission Operations. "Using the Internet we had a very quick turn around with checklist updates, payload flight data file changes, experiment updates and procedure updates. It was much faster than the old Federal Express method we used to use."

Secretaries use the Internet to obtain travel per diem rates, check information on hotels, access the on-line supply catalog and order forms for their office. They also are able to check schedules for other managers and calendars for conferences. Other employees who took the time to fill out the survey gave specifics on their job and how the Internet helps to reduce time and provide the latest technological information on their discipline.

"I have to do extensive research on advanced imaging techniques," said Dan Willett, an engineer in the Information Systems Office. "The Internet is where the latest technology information is. It is an extremely useful tool that dramatically speeds up research."

"I no longer have to wait days or even weeks for new releases of evaluation software I am testing," said Tammy Hoke, an electronic forms specialist for Hernandez Engineering. "Now I can usually access vendor websites and download test software immediately. Here on site, I can also search an on-line listing of official JSC forms, and even download and fill in some of them right from the web. Internet access has tremendously enhanced my



work efficiency."

"I now have access to the most up-to-date electronics industry services and parts specifications," said David Smith, a printed circuit designer for Rothe Development. "By having this access, I can reduce or eliminate re-work by obtaining exact layout data for thousands of new components."

Other employees use the Internet for interactive discussions with others in their field, document storage and even use it as an encyclopedia. More than 50 different reasons were given for how the Internet helps employees do their job better.

The survey consisted of 11 questions pertaining to the employee and the Internet. The survey asked how many employees use the Internet, with only 19 percent responding they never use it. An overwhelming 81 percent use it in one form or another. Of that 81 percent, 57 percent said they use it on a daily basis, and 94 percent said the Internet did help them on the job. Individuals who did not use the Internet were not asked to fill out a survey but were tallied.

To try and determine where employees receive the majority of their information, the survey asked how often employees log on to JSC's Home Page. Results determined that 31 percent said they log on daily, 57 percent weekly, 4 percent monthly and 8 percent did not give a response.

Employees also were asked what other Internet services—besides the World Wide Web—they use. The survey provided three choices—Electronic Mail, File Transfer Protocol and Usenet. Results showed the majority of those who use the Internet use e-mail, slightly less use FTP and only a few use Usenet. Some employees used more than one of these services while others used none.

Employees also were asked to provide final comments at the end of the survey. Responses varied from requests that calendars, schedules and travel information be kept more up to date, to requests for updated equipment so that employees could more fully use the services the Internet provides. Employees also asked for direction and/or rules on how they can use the services without violating any laws or JSC directives, and get the most out of the time spent on the Internet.

The majority of survey responses were positive and employees commented that they may not have access to some information if it were not for the Internet. They also felt it saved time and money by increasing their productivity and research skills. JSC's Management Directives Officer Alice Ayala summed up her survey best, "Utilization of the Internet is helping us become a paperless office." □



percent did not give a response. The survey also asked how often employees log on to other NASA centers and 22 percent said daily, 51 percent weekly, 7 percent monthly and 20 percent did not give a response.

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Working on the NET

